

passed leaves me deeply concerned about this Congress and where we are heading. The spending package violated the letter and the spirit of the budget agreement and hit hardest at the working and poor families of our Nation that struggle every day to get by.

Before I speak about tomorrow's vote on the unfair Republican tax cut package, I want to say a few words about what we as a body have done in voting for this budget reconciliation spending bill.

While there are many serious attacks on working families in the spending bill, like privatizing portions of Medicaid and food stamps, slashing the Federal funding for those hospitals who serve a disproportionate share of low-income patients, and block-granting children's health care, one of the most serious attacks is against the minimum wage and workplace protections for workfare participants.

The budget reconciliation bill condemns working welfare recipients to second class citizenship. The bill specifically states that benefits provided to these workers in their jobs are not to be considered wages or compensation. With this devious language, the bill denies these hundreds of thousands of hard-working mothers and parents the rights that all American workers now enjoy, and it denies these workers the enforcement and remedial protections of the Fair Labor Standards Act. This is wrong. It must not be retained in the final passage of the bill.

Tomorrow we turn our attention to the other half of our Nation's budget, the tax cut package. The Republican leadership have made their priorities known with their budget proposals.

Their \$835 billion tax cut package gives the wealthiest Americans the largest tax benefits and pushes the poor further into poverty. The wealthiest 20 percent of the U.S. population would receive a whopping 87 percent of the net benefits. But the bottom 60 percent would share only 4 percent of these tax benefits. In fact, the poorest 20 percent of the population that has only 4.5 percent of the Nation's after-tax income would receive none of the gain.

Most of the tax cuts benefit upper-income people. Open-ended estate tax cuts would benefit only the richest 1.5 percent of families. They give the wealthiest Americans deficit busting capital gains tax breaks. In addition, the Republicans have the audacity to propose that these tax breaks for the wealthy be indexed for inflation. And this is the same leadership that is opposed to cost-of-living increases for working Americans.

At the same time, the Republicans' proposal denies the working poor the tax relief they guarantee the rich. The Republicans took the President's education tax package, including the HOPE scholarship, and undermined its goal of reaching the neediest students. The Republican plan would cover only

half of tuition costs, even for the first 2 years of college.

The bill also denies the \$500 per child tax credit to over 15 million families. It does this by denying the full benefit of the child tax credit to the poorest of working poor, those who are eligible for the earned income tax credit. Contrary to what the Republicans allege, it is only those that are employed and pay payroll taxes that are eligible for their earned income tax credit. They deserve all the help they can get, and this bill denies them this much needed help.

We should not forget that the budget deal was a serious compromise from the President's original budget proposal, which many of us felt fell short of the Nation's needs in many critical areas.

For example, the measly \$5 billion requested by the President for education infrastructure, that is, to fix up the Nation's schools, schools with no air conditioning, schools where the heating systems are broken, schools where windows and roofs need repair, all of this was denied, taken off the table because the Republicans said no.

But at the same time, conservative estimates put the real cost of addressing the infrastructure problem at over \$100 billion, and we could not get them to agree to \$5 billion. And what about a real jobs program that pays a living wage, instead of trying to pay the working poor subminimum wages and deny their workplace rights?

Let us be clear, this Republican tax bill is an outrage. We will all end up paying dearly for it in the end. It will make it much more difficult it address our Nation's real problems.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this unfair tax cut bill and reject this attack on working Americans and poor Americans.

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP EDWARD T. HUGHES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bishop Edward T. Hughes, the Second Bishop of Metuchen, NJ. Just this past Sunday, the 22nd of June, I attended a mass to celebrate his 50 year anniversary of ordination into the priesthood.

Over the past 50 years, Bishop Hughes has inspired, educated, counseled, and guided thousands in countless ways. So many of the people that I represent have been touched and aided by his kind words and actions. On a daily basis, Bishop Hughes has in a special way comforted those in times of sorrow and been an instrumental part of the joy and happiness of many families and individuals.

Bishop Hughes is a loving man that shepherds his flock with care and gentleness. He is an outspoken defender of the unborn and a foe of rac-

ism and bigotry. He fully understands the importance of his mission in spreading the word of God to his community. He has devoted his life to being a shepherd for the Lord by spreading spirituality and grace.

Through his good works and deeds, he has touched all those who have been in his presence. In today's fast paced environment and a world that is often filled with sadness and violence, he demonstrates how each of us can find a place for faith and remember what is good and right.

It was in early life that he, in 1938, at the tender age of 18, dedicated his life to serving Jesus Christ and entered St. Charles Seminary. Since that time he has used his wealth of knowledge to teach history and act as a positive role model for many young people.

Pope Paul VI recognized his outstanding service in 1976 and appointed him auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia, and he was ordained Bishop in July of that year by John Cardinal Krol. As Bishop he met new challenges head-on and demonstrated his leadership on a national level, most recently as chairman of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops Implementation Committee for the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

In December of 1986 Pope John Paul II recognized what so many Roman Catholics in New Jersey and Pennsylvania had and named Bishop Hughes chief shepherd of the Diocese of Metuchen which consists of nearly a half million faithful. The Diocese has seen unprecedented growth during the Bishop's tenure. He has dedicated more than 15 churches and blessed numerous other facilities.

The Bishop has a keen sense of social responsibility and has reached out to community shelters, clinics, and other agencies of assistance to help those in need. He truly does the Lord's work.

Today there is an increased importance placed on cultural diversity and understanding. The Bishop has reached out to the Hispanic, Asian, African-American, and Portuguese members of the community and increased cultural understanding among these groups while spreading God's love of all people.

The Diocese of Metuchen has been very fortunate to have him as their Bishop; and on behalf of the citizens of the 12th District of New Jersey, I would like to offer my congratulations and thank the Bishop for the time that he has devoted to the people of the Metuchen Diocese.

Bishop Hughes' motto is "Rejoice in the Lord always," and his life and service have truly been a model of just that.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIAHRT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. BROWN] is recognized for 5 minutes.